



Prop Wash

Experimental Aircraft Association
Chapter 517 December 2007

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Prez Sez December 2007

Well folks, this will be the last message from me as your President. This is an excellent opportunity to reflect on the changes that have occurred since I became involved in Chapter leadership six years ago. The Chapter has taken on a completely new character from the times when we had around 15 members. We presently have XX on the roles split nearly evenly between regular members and supporting members. The first meeting of the Chapter that I attended was held in the old Missoula Airport Board Chambers upstairs in the terminal. Now, of course, we are alternating our meeting location between Missoula and the Chapter hangar in Stevensville.

Yes, the Chapter now has a hangar that is 50% owned by the bank, but we have a place to call our own. Our hangar facility has served as a focal point for many of our social and fund raising activities. In 2007, we even installed the deck that was on our "to do list" for several years. The Chapter "home" was most instrumental in attracting many of our members.

The Chapter web site, which has been in operation for 4-5 years now, gives the Chapter a very nice presence on the World Wide Web. This site has led to many contacts from people all over the United states. Several members have ideas that need to be developed to improve our web site for the benefit of the Chapter and members.

For four out of the last six years, the Chapter has sponsored and hosted week long youth Aviation Youth Academies for hundreds of children in Western Montana. Some were in conjunction with school districts and some were totally on our own. That will continue in 2008.

Our monthly breakfast has morphed from a fund raising event to pay the mortgage on the hangar to an monthly event that is mostly social. Many people show up at the starting time and are still there when we shut down for the day. I wonder just how many lies have been told during that time? How many fun flights were hatched over a pancake or two? How many of both will happen in the future?

Oh, yes. Then there are the periodic afternoon and evening grillings. I mean cooking over an open fire, not hard core questioning. It seems more people show up for our meetings when food is available. What is that about?

In June 2007, we hosted our first fly-in in conjunction with the businesses on the Stevensville Airport. Next year should be an even bigger and better event. We learned a lot and I hope we put that education to use for the 2008 fly in.

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Our Chapter's crowning achievement to date is probably the "Fly The Big Sky" specialty license plate program. With this project, we have assured our Chapter a steady income for many years to come and this will allow the Chapter to continue programs such as our educational activities for youth and adults.

Although everything above was accomplished during my term as the Chapter President, it would not have happened without the support of the membership. Many individual members helped to accomplish all the things we have done over the last few years. I am tempted to highlight individuals by name, but I am afraid I will miss someone, so I won't go there. You know who you are and I can't adequately express my appreciation for all that you have done. As long as members step up to the plate, this Chapter will continue to thrive and grow. Chapter 517 is one of the minority of EAA Chapters with its own hangar and we may be the best financed Chapter in the world.

Thank you for your support and confidence over the years.
Steve

Christmas Party: Deadline for reservations for the jointly sponsored EAA Chapter 517 and MPA Five Valleys Hangar Christmas party on December 17th has been moved up to December 7th. The cost is \$20.00 per person. The event is at The Broadway Inn beginning at 6:00 PM. Please make your check payable to EAA Chapter 517, Inc., and mail to Sherry Rossiter, P.O. Box 16446, Missoula, MT 59808. If you have any questions, call Sherry at 542-5177.

2008 Aviation Youth Academy: The 2008 Aviation Youth Academy dates are July 7-11 and July 14-18. Our member Ray Aten will be the Instructor-in-Charge. Sherry Rossiter will coordinate logistics.

2008 Mid Winter Chili Tasting: Watch your January newsletter for the date of the Fourth Annual Mid Winter Chili Tasting.

EAA's Push For New Homebuilt Rules: The Experimental Aviation Association is seeking to expand channels that would allow aircraft enthusiasts to build and fly their own airplane while participating less in that aircraft's construction process. The organization's latest push "supports the revision of the existing experimental 'Primary Kit Built' category to make this certification category readily available to consumers that desire to build their own personal aircraft without a restriction on the amount of commercial assistance they receive." The FAA has indicated that a new policy statement regarding amateur-built rules may be forthcoming in the new year. Note that EAA's board of directors last week voted to preserve existing amateur-building in support of "the 51-percent rule," which very appropriately allows certification in the experimental category for any aircraft built at least 51 percent by its owner. EAA says its new drive is simply pushing for FAA approval of alternatives for kit manufacturers and their customers. EAA sees key elements in this push as the FAA recognizing and empowering an industry-auditing group to ensure compliance with quality and safety standards for kit-built aircraft similar to those created in the light-sport market.

Fuel flowage fee increase. The Airport Board has proposed to fund an immediate study of hangar building site availability with funds raised from an increase in the fuel flowage fee GA pilots now pay to the Airport with every fuel purchase. The current fee is \$0.05 and the proposal is for an increase of \$0.05 (an additional \$1.00 to fill a C-150; \$20.00 for a King Air). The increased revenue could be in the range of \$50,000 – 60,000 and would enable the Airport to conduct the site availability study with the assurance of a funding source. **This revenue would be earmarked specifically for GA funding only, so now is the time that we need to hear from you. If you are opposed to the 5-cent increase in the flowage fee, please respond to this e-mail with your opposition.** The fee is a proposal that could carry hangar building planning forward, but the Airport Board would like to know if you support this measure or not.

December 13, 7 PM, Airport Conference Room. Anyone interested in hangar building at Missoula needs to attend this meeting if at all possible, whether your interest is to own for yourself, own and lease to others, or lease without owning. Each person who has previously expressed interest in either owning or renting a hangar will be individually contacted, as will all other Missoula pilots on our e-mail list. Please help us spread the word; **this is an important meeting for two reasons:** 1) An accurate count of individuals who want to build hangars is important for the Airport Master Plan Update process, just underway; 2) The Airport expects to make land available for hangar building this summer, under terms favorable to GA pilots. At this meeting we will discuss these terms and potential costs to you to develop a hangar. We will also discuss the establishment of a paid waiting list for hangar development on the Airport. **If you cannot attend the meeting and have input or would like to get on the hangar builder list, please contact Greg Phillips, Deputy Director (728-4381; GregP@flymissoula.com).**

T-hangar builders, at this meeting you can select between two building types, the least expensive “prefabricated” hangar and the traditional condo hangar. **T-hangar site and infrastructure cost:** The Airport has identified available land in the vicinity of Homestead Helicopters as a site where T-hangars could be built during the summer of 2008. *Infrastructure (utilities and taxiways) is available at this site and will be provided without cost to T-hangar builders.*

Stand-alone hangar builders, at this meeting you can consider the building site options available near Golf Taxiway. **T-hangar site and infrastructure cost:** *Infrastructure (utilities and taxiways) is not available at this site and will carry an additional cost to stand-alone hangar builders. Completion of the GA portion of the ongoing Airport Master Plan at the end of January is expected to confirm the availability of the Golf site for hangar building during summer, 2008. The Homestead site is not available for stand-alone hangars because the building profile is higher than for T-hangars and would block the view from the ATCT controllers to the arrival end of runway 29.*

Item 1. The latest edition of the MSO GA News is ready for reading, at your pleasure. It is on both the Airport’s web site and EAA Chapter 517’s site:

Airport: http://www.flymissoula.com/index.aspx/General_aviation/GANews

EAA Chapter 517: <http://www.eaa517.org/newsletters/GANews1207.pdf>

Item 2. The Airport is evaluating a possible 5-cent per gallon increase in the fuel flowage fee to help fund GA development. There is concern that the revenue would fund only a “study”. Airport Authority Finance Committee Chair, Jack Meyer, provides the following clarification about the proposed increase in the fuel flowage fee:

“What the finance committee wants the board to consider is raising the fuel flowage fee to pay for GA infrastructure improvements along with the related studies and engineering. I must stress the board needs to approve any action taken to raise the tax. Please clarify that the tax would go to more than just a study.”

The Airport wants to know whether GA pilots favor this means of supporting GA improvements or whether they oppose it. To date, only 4 responses have been received, 2 supporting and 2 opposing. Whether you support or oppose, please let me know. I’ll tally the responses and forward them to the Airport. Gary: <mailto:gjmatson@montana.com>

Item 3. Important meeting, Thursday, December 13th, 7 PM, Airport Conference Room. Subject: GA hangar building. The purpose of the meeting is to find out how many persons have a solid interest in building either a T-hangar or a stand alone hangar to either own or lease to others. Time schedules and possible building types and sites will be discussed.

Gary Matson
370-6584

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